



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS
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FOUNDER
Mrs. Sybil Brand

CHAIRPERSON
Mrs. Eleanor R. Montañó

VICE CHAIRPERSON
Mr. Frank S. Bacio

Ms. Barbara Bigby
Ms. Rita Hall
Mr. John A. Hammargren
Mrs. Anne S. Hill
Mr. Carl E. Moore

MINUTES OF THE **SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION FOR INSTITUTIONAL INSPECTIONS** **MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING** **AUGUST 19, 2009**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Montañó called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Chair Montañó led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Chair Eleanor R. Montañó
Vice Chair Frank Bacio
Barbara Bigby
John A. Hammargren
Anne S. Hill
Carl E. Moore

Excused Absence

Rita Hall

Commission Services Staff

Martha Arana
Jimmy Prieto
Andrew Sevrin

Others Present

Alan P. Henry, Community Care Licensing
Peter Zertuche, Community Care Licensing
Commander Margaret Ruiz, Sheriff's Department
Captain Warren Asmus, Sheriff's Department
Howard Wong, Probation Department
Adam Bettino, Probation Department
Dorothy Channel, Department of Children and Family Services
Barbara Butler, Department of Children and Family Services

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Chair Montañó welcomed everyone in attendance and requested that Department Representatives introduce themselves.

Community Care Licensing (CCL) Division:

Alan Henry gave the following report:

- There have been no closures of County-contracted group homes this month.
- The Community Care Licensing has received an application from the *Positive Path Youth Development Center* (currently located at 801 E. Radbard Street, Carson CA 90746) to relocate to a new location in the city of Carson on Neptune Street, former residence of the *Manna Manor Home*.
- Effective July 28, 2009, Community Care Licensing application fees will increase by (10%) ten percent.

Peter Zertuche reported that due to the three-day furloughs per month, CCL staff will be unable to attend Commission meetings on a monthly basis, but will attend quarterly. However, the Commission may contact CCL as needed.

Sheriff's Department:

Commander Margaret Ruiz provided the Commission with the "*Inmate Assaults on Staff*" report, and reported the following:

- Between July 15, 2009 and August 18, 2009, there have been no complaints filed by inmates regarding the "use of force" by Deputy personnel.
- It is the Goal of the Department, in dealing with the budget crisis, not to close custody facilities at the courts; to date, no facilities have been closed.
- Grand total of inmate "*assaults on staff*" was down by two incidents from last reporting period.
- Information on the progress of the construction of the Men's Central Jail will be reported at the next business meeting.

Captain Warren Asmus reported the following:

- The Long Beach Courthouse has completed repairs to the portion of the floors that needed repairing. Further repairs to the floor are still needed. Photos showing progress were provided. He commended and thanked the Commission for bringing this matter to facilities' attention.
- Airport Court has corrected concerns on the turn out gear, and repaired the elevator floor.
- Legislation was changed, and effective the third Wednesday of September 2009, the Courts will begin "Court Holiday" closures.

- The Superior Court of Los Angeles will pay for some of the Sheriff Personnel costs for security at courthouses; however, they will not pay for the fringe benefits portion, which is approximately 4.5%. This equates to roughly 45 positions. While Sheriff's salaries and benefits are currently under negotiation, if LA Superior Court does not pay the fringe benefits portion, the Sheriff will remove 45 positions from the courts, resulting in courthouse closures.
- The Kenyon Juvenile Justice Center has a potential of being closed.
- Currently, Probation is responsible for youths from the time they leave probation camps until the time of their return to camp. However, Los Angeles County Sheriff's handles probation youths while in Court. LASD and Probation Department will begin to work on policy to address force incidents between probations youths and outside agencies i.e. LASD.
- Funding is being sought to repair the door security control panel at the Edmond D. Edelman Children's Court. A quote in the amount of \$175,000 was received by one contractor for repairs; however, other avenues are being explored.
- The Compton Courthouse's Secondary Containment System (camera system) will be running fulltime, effective September 1, 2009. The Commission was invited to see a demonstration.

Probation Department:

Mr. Howard Wong, Director, Residential-Based Services, reported the following:

- On August 15, 2009, the Dorothy Kirby Center hosted a parent's day ice-cream social event. The event was a success; approximately 32 parents attended.
- The Challenger Memorial Youth Center (Challenger) houses six camps with approximately 110 youths in each camp. Camp Michael Smith is currently closed due to construction on site. Camp Ellison Onizuka is currently housing the "GJJ Returns" (youth authority returns from the State). A report dated July 23, 2009, indicates Challenger's youth population is 531. The Commission may contact Mr. Alberto Ramirez to coordinate camp inspections.
- The Aviva Center, Hamburger Home (Aviva Girls Diagnostic Center) in Van Nuys currently houses 26 minors. There are 12 deputy probation officers (DPOs) assigned to the 26 minors. One DPO has a caseload of 13 minors. A DPO services a minor at a minimal of one time per month. The same DPO services the minor throughout the minor's stay. DPOs are present during Family consultations engagements.
- Probation camp population has dropped across the board; group homes used to average approximately 1,400 youth; the current population averages 1,000 youths.

Department of Children and Family Services:

Ms. Dorothy Channel reported the following:

- Group home data circa June 1 through August 18, 2009, reports 625 cases of runaways, 29 referrals of Physical Abuse, and 10 referrals of Sexual Abuse. Some of the referrals reported were inconclusive and unfounded.
- Sand Hill Group Home voluntarily closed to repair their bathrooms and roof. The "hold" status was lifted from the home on August 17, 2009; the home can now receive clients.
- Trish Ploehn, DCFS Director, has implemented enhancements effective July 28, 2009, to front end management. The approval level has been raised to the Assistant Regional Administrator (ARA) regarding allegations that come back unfounded. The ARA must review and sign off on these reports. If a Children's Social Worker (CSW) requests "Alternative Services" (a referral to the family for counseling, therapy, "wraparound services," etc.) the approval level is also raised to the ARA position.
- Emergency Response training has been enhanced for more effective results. One of the enhancements is that CSWs will look at data provided from other Departments (Mental Health, Sheriffs, etc.) when assessing a case to ensure preventative security for the child.

Ms. Barbara Butler, DCFS, added that a new unit called Quality Improvement will assess all Emergency Response referrals to ensure that home visitations have been safe and thorough.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 12, 2009, MEETING MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Bigby, seconded by Vice Chair Bacio and unanimously carried, the minutes of August 12, 2009, were approved with the following correction:

On page 3, under "Facility/Group Home Inspection Reports from August 12, 2009, to August 18, 2009," "Bourne Inc. - 2, #4" add "blinds and screens needed on all windows."

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Montaño reported on the following newspaper articles:

- "County to Probe 3 Child Deaths," Daily Breeze; August 19, 2009; regarding Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors vote on Tuesday, August 18, 2009, requesting that an investigation be conducted on the deaths of three children who were subject of reports to the Department of Children and Family Services.
- "County to Probe Child Welfare System," Los Angeles Times; August 19, 2009, regarding vote taken by Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, August 18, 2009 to launch an investigation into potential flaws in the child welfare system that might have played an role in the deaths of three children.

- “Death Show System’s Weakness,” Los Angeles Times; August 18, 2009; regarding a mother with severe mental illness who beheads her four-year old son.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Commissioner Bacio reported that the current balance of the Commission’s Charitable Fund is \$1456.93.

CORRESPONDENCE/AUDIT REPORT

Commissioners Bigby and Moore reviewed the following Audit Reports with the Commission:

CareProvider Org Foundation – 5, #1 – Audit report dated August 19, 2009.
Group home was inspected and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Deliaann Lucile Corporation – 12, #4 – Audit report dated August 19, 2009. Group home was inspected and found to be in satisfactory condition. Audit report recommends that staff treat clients with respect and dignity.

Human Resources Network/Shadow Hills – 25, #4 – Audit report dated August 19, 2009.
Group home was inspected and found to be in satisfactory condition.

FACILITY/GROUP HOME INSPECTION REPORTS FROM AUGUST 12 - 18, 2009

Counseling & Research Associate /Masada Home – 11, #2 – Commissioners Bacio and Hall
The Facility was visited on August 13, 2009, but unable to inspect; no one was home.

Boys Republic – 3, #3 – Commissioners Bigby and Hill
The facility was visited on August 14, 2009, and found to be in satisfactory condition.
Areas of Concern: Toilet needs to be repaired.

Trinity Children Family Services – 47, #3 - Commissioners Hammargren and Montañó
The facility was visited on August 17, 2009, and found to be in satisfactory condition.

Eggleston Youth Center – 16, #4 – Commissioners Bigby and Hill
The facility was visited on August 18, 2009, and found to be in satisfactory condition.
Areas of Concern: New dishwasher needed; bathroom #1, tile repair needed (not properly set).

Ettie Lee Home – 17, #3 – Commissioners Hammargren and Montañó
The facility was visited on August 18, 2009 and found it to be satisfactory condition.

NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was none.

MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (To be presented and placed on a future agenda)

There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Chair Montaño, seconded by Commission Bigby and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 11:46 a.m. in memory of Civil Rights Activist Mary B. Henry and Ernst Katz, Founder of the Jr. Philharmonic Orchestra.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Arana
Commission Services Division